

MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES

1995

INTRODUCTION

Information on marriages presented in this report was tabulated from items reported on marriage certificates filed with the New Jersey State Registrar for marriages which occurred in the calendar year 1995. Divorce information was obtained from the Chancery Division of the New Jersey Superior Court. Marriages and divorces are recorded by place of occurrence or judgment; therefore, all marriage and divorce data presented in this report encompass events that occurred in New Jersey, regardless of the place of residence of the participants. Since no mechanism for interstate exchange of resident marriage and divorce data exists, out-of-state events involving New Jersey residents are not included.

MARRIAGES**NUMBER OF MARRIAGES**

The state has experienced a decline in both number of marriages and in the marriage rate over the past decade. The number of marriages in New Jersey in 1995 totaled 52,208, a decline of 1.1 percent from the 52,797 marriages which occurred in the state in 1994 (Table MD1). The number of marriages in 1995 was the lowest number of marriages since 1977. The marriage rate in 1995 was 6.6 per 1,000 population. This represents a 1.5 percent decline from the 1994 rate of 6.7 per 1,000 population.

The number of marriages varied widely by county of occurrence. Essex County had the highest number of marriages in 1995 (5,518) and Salem County recorded the lowest number (406) (Table MD7). Six counties together recorded 51.1 percent of the marriages in 1995: Essex (5,518), Bergen (5,194), Middlesex (4,387), Monmouth (4,034), Hudson (3,974) and Passaic (3,575).

TABLE MD1. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES, MARRIAGE RATES AND MEDIAN AGE AT MARRIAGE FOR BRIDES AND GROOMS MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES ISSUED IN NEW JERSEY, 1986-1995				
	MARRIAGES		MEDIAN AGE	
YEAR	NUMBER	RATE*	BRIDES	GROOMS
1986	61,362	8.1	26.7	28.6
1987	60,550	7.9	26.9	28.8
1988	61,063	7.9	27.2	29.0
1989	60,076	7.8	27.4	29.1
1990	58,747	7.6	27.7	29.3
1991	55,832	7.2	27.6	29.4
1992	55,321	7.1	27.9	29.8
1993	53,505	6.8	28.1	29.9
1994	52,797	6.7	28.4	30.2
1995	52,208	6.6	28.5	30.4
*RATES ARE COMPUTED PER 1,000 POPULATION				

AGE

The median age at which brides married in 1995 increased over the figure from the preceding year, continuing a trend that has been in effect for more than a decade (Table MD1). The median age at which grooms married also continued its gradually increasing trend. In 1995, the mid-point for brides' ages was 28.5 years and that for males who married in 1995 was 30.4 years.

The median age at first marriage is younger than the median age at marriage for both brides and grooms, but these median ages have also been increasing over the past few decades. With the exception of a temporary reversal of the trend in 1990, the median ages of brides and grooms have steadily increased over the decade. From 1994 to 1995, the median age for first-time brides increased from 26.6 to 26.7 years. First-time grooms experienced an increase in median age from 28.2 to 28.3 over the year (Figure MD1 and Table MD2).

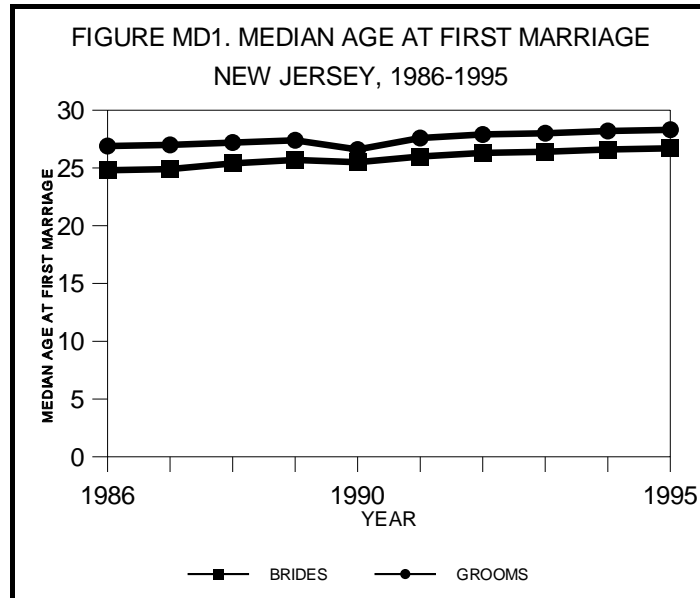


TABLE MD2. MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE NEW JERSEY, 1986-1995		
YEAR	MEDIAN AGE	
	BRIDES	GROOMS
1986	24.8	26.9
1987	24.9	27.0
1988	25.4	27.2
1989	25.7	27.4
1990	25.5	26.6
1991	26.0	27.6
1992	26.3	27.9
1993	26.4	28.0
1994	26.6	28.2
1995	26.7	28.3

New Jersey Health Statistics/1995

In 1995, exactly one-third of women marrying for the first time were under 25 years of age (33.3%). This is in sharp contrast to the 52.0 percent of first-time brides in 1986 who were less than 25 years old (Table MD3). Only 21.0 percent of first-time grooms in 1995 were under 25 years, compared to 35.4 percent in 1986. The percentages of brides and grooms marrying for the first time under the age of 25 have decreased steadily over the past decade, while the percentages of both brides and grooms who were under the age of 20 at the time of first marriage in 1995 were about half the level of ten years earlier (Table MD3 and Figure MD2). The percentage of grooms under the age of 20 in particular is at a very low level; it appears to have stabilized at 1.5 percent.

TABLE MD3. PERCENT OF BRIDES AND GROOMS UNDER 25 AND UNDER 20 YEARS OF AGE AT THE TIME OF FIRST MARRIAGE NEW JERSEY, 1986-1995				
YEAR	BRIDES		GROOMS	
	PERCENT UNDER 25	PERCENT UNDER 20	PERCENT UNDER 25	PERCENT UNDER 20
1986	52.0	8.9	35.4	3.2
1987	50.0	8.1	33.4	2.7
1988	47.5	7.0	30.8	2.4
1989	44.9	6.8	29.2	2.3
1990	46.3	6.9	29.7	2.5
1991	40.1	5.4	25.7	2.0
1992	37.9	4.9	23.6	1.7
1993	36.5	4.7	22.7	1.5
1994	34.4	4.5	22.0	1.5
1995	33.3	4.6	21.0	1.5

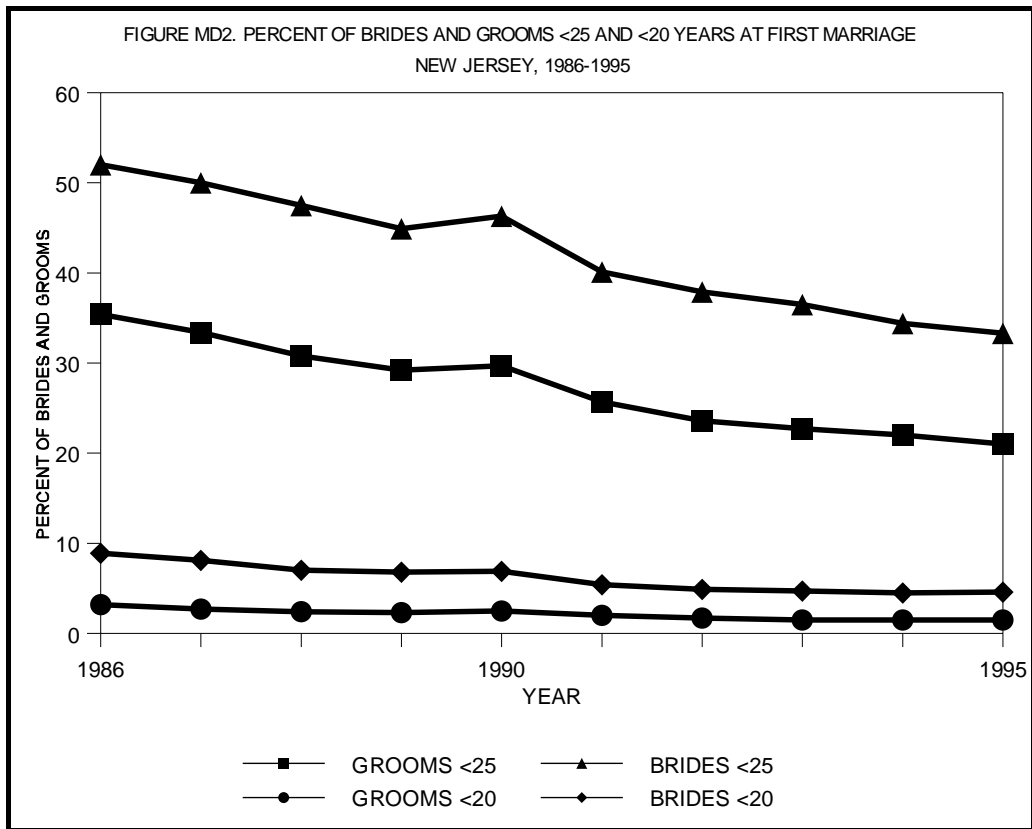


Table MD4 is a distribution of brides' ages by grooms' ages for 1994 marriages, in detailed age categories.

TABLE MD4. MARRIAGES BY AGE OF BRIDE AND AGE OF GROOM NEW JERSEY, 1995														
AGE OF BRIDE	TOTAL	AGE OF GROOM												
		NOT STATED	< 15	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
UNDER 15	9	0	0	6	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
15-19	1,786	0	1	363	942	338	100	27	9	5	1	0	0	0
20-24	11,424	0	1	181	4,604	4,880	1,286	342	83	28	15	1	1	2
25-29	17,045	1	1	26	1,556	8,992	4,521	1,355	386	130	44	20	9	4
30-34	9,327	1	0	12	306	1,940	3,630	2,110	828	346	92	41	12	9
35-39	5,396	0	0	4	117	509	1,235	1,602	1,026	545	209	95	38	16
40-44	3,057	0	0	0	34	124	340	554	802	622	340	149	60	32
45-49	1,948	0	0	0	15	31	114	217	328	502	385	213	93	50
50-54	1,070	0	0	0	2	11	38	52	97	171	258	219	127	95
55-59	539	0	0	0	0	0	3	16	28	49	84	133	120	106
60-64	270	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	5	10	15	31	74	131
65+	334	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	4	11	28	286
NOT STATED	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	52,208	2	3	592	7,578	16,830	11,268	6,279	3,593	2,410	1,447	913	562	731

Previous Marital Status

Nearly three-fourths of brides (74.3%) and a slightly lower proportion of grooms (73.4%) who married in 1995 were marrying for the first time (Table MD5). Almost one-fourth of both brides and grooms were divorced at the time of marriage in 1995 (23.3% and 24.3% of brides and grooms, respectively). The remaining brides and grooms were widowed at the time of this marriage (2.4% of brides and 2.3% of grooms). These relative percentages have changed very little over the past 10 years. Table MD6 presents the marital status of the bride at the time of marriage in 1995 distributed by similar data for grooms.

TABLE MD5. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES BY PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS NEW JERSEY, 1986-1995							
YEAR	NUMBER OF MARRIAGES	BRIDES			GROOMS		
		PERCENT NEVER MARRIED	PERCENT WIDOWED	PERCENT DIVORCED	PERCENT NEVER MARRIED	PERCENT WIDOWED	PERCENT DIVORCED
1986	61,362	74.4	2.5	23.0	72.4	2.6	25.0
1987	60,550	74.6	2.6	22.8	72.9	2.6	24.5
1988	61,063	74.6	2.5	22.9	73.0	2.6	24.4
1989	60,076	74.9	4.9	20.2	73.6	5.0	21.3
1990	58,747	74.9	2.4	22.8	73.7	2.4	23.9
1991	55,832	75.3	2.5	22.3	74.2	2.6	23.2
1992	55,321	74.3	2.5	23.3	73.5	2.5	24.0
1993	53,505	74.0	2.4	23.6	73.2	2.4	24.4
1994	52,797	74.0	2.3	23.7	73.2	2.4	24.4
1995	52,208	74.3	2.4	23.3	73.4	2.3	24.3

TABLE MD6. MARRIAGES BY PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS OF BRIDE AND GROOM NEW JERSEY, 1995					
PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS OF BRIDE	TOTAL	PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS OF GROOM			
		NEVER MARRIED	WIDOWED	DIVORCED	NOT STATED
NEVER MARRIED	38,779	32,692	249	5,833	5
WIDOWED	1,232	294	430	508	0
DIVORCED	12,182	5,327	517	6,336	2
NOT STATED	15	6	0	0	9
TOTAL	52,208	38,319	1,196	12,677	16

Race

Table MD7 presents 1995 marriages by race of bride and groom by the county of occurrence of the marriage. The data are provided by the racial categories contained on the certificate: white, black and other. Missing or not classifiable race is listed as "not stated".

County and Month

Marriages by month and county of occurrence are contained in Table MD8. In 1995, September was the most frequent month for marriages (6,847), followed by October (6,067) and June (5,860). These three months together (approximately 25 percent of the year) accounted for 36.0 percent of the total marriages during the year.

DIVORCES, ANNULMENTS AND SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ACTIONS

The figures identified as divorces in this report are reported by the New Jersey Superior Court and include divorces, annulments and separate maintenance actions. These data are presented, along with marriages, by county of occurrence in Table MD9. There were 24,293 divorces, annulments and separate maintenance actions in 1995, an increase of 394 over the 23,899 similar actions reported in 1994. The divorce rate per 1,000 population in 1995 was 3.1, an increase of 3.3 percent from the 1994 rate.

TABLE MD7. MARRIAGES BY COUNTY OF OCCURRENCE AND BY RACE OF BRIDE AND GROOM NEW JERSEY, 1995									
COUNTY	TOTAL	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		NOT STATED	
		BRIDE	GROOM	BRIDE	GROOM	BRIDE	GROOM	BRIDE	GROOM
ATLANTIC	1,875	1,544	1,545	258	244	72	86	1	0
BERGEN	5,194	4,611	4,635	290	301	290	256	3	2
BURLINGTON	2,451	2,052	2,020	336	374	63	56	0	1
CAMDEN	2,903	2,463	2,443	364	385	75	74	1	1
CAPE MAY	876	832	825	37	43	7	8	0	0
CUMBERLAND	898	760	744	126	147	12	7	0	0
ESSEX	5,518	3,594	3,609	1,781	1,771	139	137	4	1
GLOUCESTER	1,369	1,262	1,256	92	95	15	18	0	0
HUDSON	3,974	3,276	3,261	422	455	276	258	0	0
HUNTERDON	775	761	762	5	7	9	6	0	0
MERCER	2,100	1,630	1,640	414	420	55	39	1	1
MIDDLESEX	4,387	3,715	3,729	447	451	224	206	1	1
MONMOUTH	4,034	3,709	3,697	247	276	78	61	0	0
MORRIS	3,078	2,893	2,887	79	90	105	100	1	1
OCEAN	2,472	2,383	2,380	66	73	23	19	0	0
PASSAIC	3,575	3,022	3,006	470	496	83	73	0	0
SALEM	406	366	361	35	42	5	3	0	0
SOMERSET	1,689	1,505	1,520	100	100	83	69	1	0
SUSSEX	768	754	752	10	11	3	5	1	0
UNION	3,340	2,663	2,639	582	608	94	92	1	1
WARREN	508	497	493	8	11	3	3	0	1
MILITARY	18	11	11	6	7	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	52,208	44,303	44,215	6,175	6,407	1,715	1,576	15	10

Marriages and Divorces/1995

TABLE MD8. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES BY COUNTY AND MONTH OF OCCURRENCE NEW JERSEY, 1995													
COUNTY	TOTAL	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
ATLANTIC	1,875	66	131	108	151	191	199	150	168	232	211	145	123
BERGEN	5,194	173	200	259	417	554	570	456	524	660	669	402	310
BURLINGTON	2,451	90	104	128	191	237	272	253	215	335	248	195	183
CAMDEN	2,903	105	129	143	233	309	309	265	235	394	349	252	180
CAPE MAY	876	28	50	26	67	88	124	54	66	142	109	66	56
CUMBERLAND	898	44	54	59	63	84	110	103	88	95	98	55	45
ESSEX	5,518	211	254	340	457	598	603	531	556	636	564	420	348
GLOUCESTER	1,369	34	63	58	107	150	161	121	116	201	173	111	74
HUDSON	3,974	184	252	295	301	421	415	309	396	445	350	295	311
HUNTERDON	775	17	16	22	45	105	99	66	60	146	115	51	33
MERCER	2,100	66	99	74	160	231	268	197	202	287	240	157	119
MIDDLESEX	4,387	164	227	264	347	460	468	376	413	517	532	335	284
MONMOUTH	4,034	111	164	155	321	445	454	398	416	597	480	297	196
MORRIS	3,078	94	99	137	191	341	355	268	317	488	433	207	148
OCEAN	2,472	81	100	135	163	252	271	237	222	365	331	174	141
PASSAIC	3,575	146	189	194	291	351	412	322	358	434	395	254	229
SALEM	406	11	11	14	32	39	49	47	38	50	48	33	34
SOMERSET	1,689	50	56	86	132	201	208	140	172	239	188	120	97
SUSSEX	768	17	16	26	56	96	92	77	67	114	123	34	50
UNION	3,340	126	178	205	289	374	350	315	295	385	344	275	204
WARREN	508	15	16	23	40	45	67	52	40	83	65	38	24
MILITARY	18	2	0	3	0	0	4	3	1	2	2	1	0
TOTAL	52,208	1,835	2,408	2,754	4,054	5,572	5,860	4,740	4,965	6,847	6,067	3,917	3,189

TABLE MD9. MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES BY COUNTY OF OCCURRENCE NEW JERSEY, 1995				
COUNTY	NUMBER OF MARRIAGES	RATE*	NUMBER OF DIVORCES**	RATE*
ATLANTIC	1,875	8.0	1,007	4.3
BERGEN	5,194	6.1	2,334	2.8
BURLINGTON	2,451	6.1	1,335	3.3
CAMDEN	2,903	5.7	1,574	3.1
CAPE MAY	876	8.9	367	3.7
CUMBERLAND	898	6.5	488	3.5
ESSEX	5,518	7.3	2,187	2.9
GLOUCESTER	1,369	5.6	733	3.0
HUDSON	3,974	7.2	1,617	2.9
HUNTERDON	775	6.7	374	3.2
MERCER	2,100	6.4	1,012	3.1
MIDDLESEX	4,387	6.3	2,289	3.3
MONMOUTH	4,034	6.9	1,810	3.1
MORRIS	3,078	6.9	1,193	2.7
OCEAN	2,472	5.3	1,464	3.1
PASSAIC	3,575	7.7	1,318	2.8
SALEM	406	6.3	192	3.0
SOMERSET	1,689	6.4	749	2.8
SUSSEX	768	5.5	492	3.5
UNION	3,340	6.7	1,473	3.0
WARREN	508	5.3	285	3.0
MILITARY	18	N/A	0	N/A
TOTAL	52,208	6.6	24,293	3.1
*RATES ARE COMPUTED PER 1,000 POPULATION				
**FIGURES INCLUDE DIVORCES, ANNULMENTS AND SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ACTIONS				